



NEWSLINE

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Multi-state Efforts Pay Off for Montana's Transportation System

As the fourth largest state in the US and with a population density less than 8% of the national average, Montana faces many challenges in maintaining and improving a large transportation system with limited resources. One way MDT has addressed these challenges is by partnering with the four US states and three Canadian provinces that border Montana on projects and issues of mutual interest. These efforts have resulted in decreased costs to the taxpayers and better service for highways users. Following are some examples of these multi-state (and multi-national) efforts.

Joint Ports of Entry

MDT is working with the Wyoming Department of Transportation to replace two outdated and unsafe ports of entry on Interstate 90 between Billings and Sheridan with one modern facility at the Dietz Interchange just

north of Sheridan. The new port of entry, which will resemble the joint Idaho/Montana facility on Interstate 90 west of Missoula, will incorporate state-of-the-art technology to reduce delays and improve enforcement. Construction of the new port is estimated to begin in 2003.

In addition to the joint ports of entry with Idaho and Wyoming, Montana shares a joint use vehicle inspection facility with Alberta at the Coutts-Sweet Grass border crossing on Interstate 15 north of Shelby. Alberta and Montana are also working with US and Canadian government agencies on the new border crossing station at the same site.

Montana Alberta Bilateral Advisory Council (MABAC)

Since its creation in 1985, MABAC has provided Montana and Alberta officials with a forum to discuss issues and problems in a constructive environment. MDT has taken part in MABAC from the beginning to discuss transportation issues and improve coordination with Alberta transportation officials.

Five-State Coalition

Because Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, North Dakota and South Dakota share some of the most rural transportation characteristics in the US, the five states have formed a unique coalition to discuss common issues and concerns. Montana's transportation program directly benefited from this relationship during the Federal reauthorization process as a result of the unified work of this group of states.

Rest Areas

As a result of commitments in the 1999 Montana Rest Area Plan, MDT has initiated a major effort to improve Montana's rest areas. However, because new rest areas are expensive, MDT has increasingly participated in partnering efforts with adjacent states to provide these facilities at lower cost to Montana's taxpayers. Two of these facilities under construction at Lost Trail Pass and Lolo Pass are jointly funded by the Idaho Transportation Department, the US Forest Service, and MDT.



Entrance sign for
Lolo Pass Rest Area

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Front Elevation

Proposed Design for Lolo Pass Rest Area & Visitor Center



US 93 IMPROVEMENTS

This is the first in a new series to highlight successful projects around the state accomplished with TEA-21 funds.

Montana's US 93 corridor has long been one of the highest priorities for development in the state. It links two of the fastest growing areas in Montana with Interstate 90 and provides for regional trade movements from British Columbia in the north through to the Southwest U.S. Additionally, for many travelers, US 93 is the gateway to Glacier National Park, the crown jewel of the National Park system.

The entire corridor is roughly 288 miles long and before development began in the 1980s, US 93 travelers drove the entire corridor with few, if any, opportunities to pass. These conditions not only made for slow going, but also contributed to US 93's reputation as one of the most dangerous corridors in the State. As sections have been improved, driving conditions are not only safer and more convenient, but the highway itself is making a contribution to the beauty and quality of life for those living along it and visiting western Montana.

While improvement projects have occurred all the way from the Idaho line to the Canadian Border, the major focus of the improvements over the last 15 years has been on the approximately 110-mile section between Hamilton (south of Missoula) and Whitefish in the north. Three environmental impact statements for the following corridor segments have preceded these improvements: Hamilton to Lolo, Evaro to Polson and Somers to Whitefish. Overall, these environmental documents, along with a very unique Memorandum of Agreement between the State, the Federal Government and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT), support design concepts for over \$250 million in highway improvements. All of these improvements are complete reconstructions.

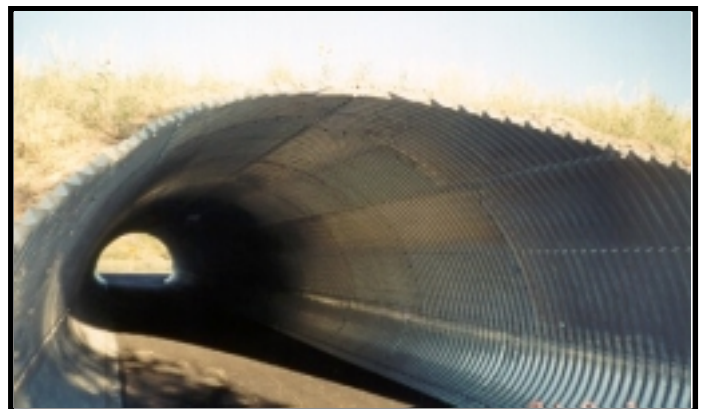
The design on all of these projects was developed

with input from citizen advisory committees. Some of the features of these designs include: avoidance of historic properties, utilization of an abandoned railroad to minimize right-of-way needs, bike and pedestrian paths throughout, significant avoidance of wetlands, prime and unique farmlands, unique community entrance signs designed by community-based task forces, park and ride lots, landscaped entrances to the cities, pedestrian underpasses to link neighborhoods, numerous wildlife crossings, and roadway designs that highlight the scenic beauty of the corridor. Throughout the corridor, the roadway design has responded to local government's concern regarding land use change and



Community entrance signs

cont'd on next page



Pedestrian underpass



Landscaped entrance to cities

incorporates access management consistent with local land use plans.

While there is now a general sense of pride in the US 93 construction projects, US 93's development has not been free of controversy. In the early 1980's, a series of environmental assessments were halted and environmental impact statements required by the Federal government or through Congressional action. The documents coming from these lengthy processes were also not free of controversy. One of these controversies resulted in a failure to reach consensus between the CSKT and the State on a design alternative for US 93 within the Flathead Reservation. What followed was a multi-year process that worked toward an agreed on design concept within the Reservation. In December of 2000, with the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement, the CSKT, FHWA and the State of Montana reached agreement on how to proceed into design



Sidewalk treatment

on this important segment of US 93. The design concepts within the Reservation boundary will demonstrate respect for the beauty of the location and for the culture of the CSKT.

Currently, the big challenge is to accelerate construction within the Res-

ervation. It is expected the State will finance this construction through bonds to be repaid with future Federal-aid funds. Actual design will begin later this year after the original environmental document is re-evaluated. Crucial to timely delivery of the 9 highway construction projects that will move forward is the re-evaluation of the original environmental document and a supplemental environmental impact study of the Ninepipes area. Progress also goes on in the rest of the corridor with tentative construction letting dates before or by 2004.

For more information contact Loran Frazier at (406) 523-5800 or lfrazier@state.mt.us.

Commission Approves Over 100 New Projects

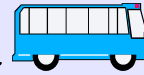
At its August 2 meeting, the Montana Transportation Commission approved over 100 new projects on Montana's highways. These projects are part of the Draft version of the 2002-2004 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which was prepared and distributed in June.

The STIP is a list of most major transportation projects planned for Montana for the next three Federal fiscal years. The Transportation Commission approved the selected projects from a list of over 250 proposed projects. The approved projects will be incorporated into the 2002-2004 Final STIP, which is scheduled to be released in October, pending approval by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration.

To request a copy of the 2002 Final STIP:

- Check with your local library
- Visit MDT's Internet site: <http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/planning/stip.html>
- Call the Montana Department of Transportation at 1-800-714-7296 or Jeff Ebert at (406) 444-7639, jebert@state.mt.us,
- or Deidra Klobberdanz at (406) 444-9193, dklobberdanz@state.mt.us
- Write the Montana Department of Transportation, Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, PO Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620-1001.

The TTY number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-335-7592. Alternative accessible formats of the information will be made available upon request.



Ride 'em Cowboys!

The 2001 Montana Bus Rodeo took place on Saturday, June 30, 2001 in Billings with Billings MET Transit hosting the event.



Overall driver participation doubled from last year as drivers from around the state were able to try out the course along with those who competed and showcased their skills in the two divisions. Large bus operators – 40 feet or greater – competed in Division I, while small bus operators – less than 40 feet – competed in Division II.

When the competition ended, Steve Leichner and Ruth Wattles, both of Billings MET Transit emerged as winners of Division I and II, respectively. Bryan Ursery of Mountain Line in Missoula finished second and Wayne Ogger of Billings MET Transit took third in Division I. Dennis Woods of Helena Dial-A-Ride was runner-up and Jack Smith of CNVS in Missoula placed third in Division II.

As winners, Leichner and Wattles both qualify for a trip to the National Bus Rodeos. Drivers were also awarded medals for first, second and third place.

Bozeman Transit Plan

The consulting firm of Robert Peccia and Associates of Helena recently completed the Greater Bozeman Area Transit Development Plan for the City of Bozeman.

The highlight of the plan was a recommendation to consolidate Bobcat Transit and Galavan with the transit system administered by the City. The system will provide transit service to the general public in the Bozeman area.

Bobcat Transit, Montana State University's transit system, only runs while school is in session and isn't ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessible. Galavan, the local specialized transit provider, does have ADA accessible vehicles and operates Monday through Friday.

The City of Bozeman could submit a funding proposal to MDT as early as February 2002. For more information contact Janis Winston at (406) 444-4210 or jwinston@state.mt.us.



Terminal

Billings Bus Depot

MDT recently signed a contract with Greyhound Lines, to provide Federal Transit Administration funding to begin a second phase of restoration/reconstruction at the Billings Bus Depot in downtown Billings. Work is expected to begin in the spring of 2002 and be complete by December 2002.

Greyhound Lines completed the first phase of the depot renovation in 2000, which included the restoration of the interior of the bus depot's waiting area, rest rooms and management offices. The second phase will restore or replace the exterior facade and complete major upgrades to the bus bays. Funding for the depot project is from the Federally-mandated set aside of FTA Section 5311 funds for intercity bus projects.

The architecture firm of A & E Architects of Billings designed the renovations for all phases of the project and will continue to assist MDT and Greyhound Lines in the administration and oversight of the project. For more information contact Tom Stuber at (406) 444-9216 or tstuber@state.mt.us.



Terminal



Restroom

Bicycle & Pedestrian Facility Funding

The demand for bicycle and pedestrian facilities is on the rise and the Montana Department of Transportation has programs to help fund these facilities. These programs include the Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) and the Montana Air & Congestion Initiative (MACI).

Federal law requires that 10% of the Surface Transportation Program funds each state receives be spent on projects or portions of projects that enhance the transportation system. Eligible projects include historic building renovations, roadway landscaping, control of highway runoff, and bicycle and pedestrian paths. In response to this Federal mandate, MDT and the Montana Transportation Commission worked with the Montana Association of Counties and the League of Cities and Towns to develop CTEP. Unlike enhancement programs in other states, CTEP projects are selected by local and tribal governments rather than the state. Since the creation of this unique program in 1992, local governments have selected dozens of bicycle and pedestrian projects in communities across Montana. Contact your local city or county commissioners about future CTEP projects in your area.

In addition to CTEP, MACI also funds bicycle and pedestrian facilities. MDT developed MACI to take advantage of a TEA-21 change in Federal Law that allows some states additional flexibility in the use of Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program funds. In an effort to proactively address air quality problems, MDT provides MACI funds to projects in high risk as well as nonattainment areas. MACI bicycle and pedestrian projects include a project to address sidewalk needs on 80 blocks of streets in northwest Kalispell. MACI has also provided over \$6 million in new street maintenance equipment including 36 street sweepers for Montana communities. This equipment has made our streets and sidewalks safer and cleaner for bicycles and pedestrians while improving air quality.

In addition to focused programs such as CTEP and MACI, MDT also includes bicycle and pedestrian features in major highway construction projects where appropriate. This practice of including paths and sidewalks in highway construction projects usually results in a cost savings when compared to building the facilities separately.

For more CTEP information contact Mike Davis at (406) 444-4383 or midavis@state.mt.us. Contact Tom Steyaert at (406) 444-7646 or tsteyaert@state.mt.us for more information about MACI.

MDT's Bike-Ped

Coordinator - Here to Help!

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) is responsible for the development and maintenance of a safe and efficient multimodal transportation system including bicycle and pedestrian facilities. MDT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator coordinates bicycle and pedestrian planning activities with federal, state and local government agencies and community groups in support of this mission.

The coordinator provides technical and planning support to Montana communities interested in improving bicycle and pedestrian networks; researches and compiles standards, specifications and best practices; reviews highway construction projects early in the project development process to identify potential bicycle and pedestrian issues; acts as a clearinghouse for bicycle and pedestrian information; and attends planning and coordination meetings to gather input and discuss options with communities. The coordinator also acts as a point of contact for cyclists, advocates, tourists and concerned citizens and facilitates training for MDT staff, local governments officials, and consultants to help ensure everyone is updated on current standards and best practices.

For more information contact Carol Strizich, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, at (406) 444-9273 or cstrizich@state.mt.us. The website also includes a wealth of information about Montana bicycle and pedestrian laws and issues at <http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/planning/ctep/bicycle.html>.

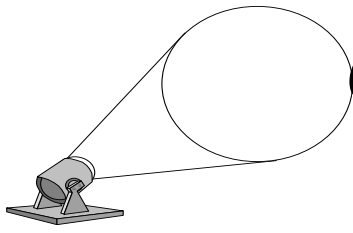
Aids Vaccine Ride across Montana

The week of July 30th to August 4th, 1,025 bicyclists traveled from Missoula to Billings for the Aids Vaccine ride.

The group covered approximately 80 miles a day and rode 575 miles in 7 days. Each rider raised \$3,500 to participate and was provided with food, medical attention if needed, sleeping quarters, a bicycle repair shop and even entertainment.



Recumbent bicyclist entering Centennial Park in Helena



CTEP Project Spotlight

(Community Transportation Enhancement Program)

Foot-by-Foot, Mile-by-Mile, Butte is Building Trails

Butte-Silver Bow County, Montana's smallest county, has a population of 35,000, with the majority living within the Urban boundaries.

While Butte's population reflects typical trail user groups (i.e. runners, walkers, and mountain/road bicyclists), the senior population also provides a significant portion of trail users for health reasons. Butte has three community parks, five neighborhood parks, seven mini-parks, and a number of recreation-related facilities, and while citizens enjoy these amenities, trail development had not been a priority when these facilities were constructed.

Over the last several years, public comment and evaluation has illustrated the community's lack of facilities to serve alternate modes of transportation. City sidewalks provide primary walking routes, some parks provide surfaced walking paths, while many bicyclists, runners and walkers rely on less traveled dirt roads, in the vicinity of the Urban area.

In response to these observations, the community developed a recreational trail master plan (see insert) as a guide for a trail network in and around Butte. This plan ranges from improving the connectivity of the city's sidewalk system to a greenway trail corridor. In many cases, these proposed trail routes combine recreational opportunities within cultural and historic areas. Connection from the Urban areas to trails on public lands such as the Continental Divide Trail is being considered. Over **65 miles** of Butte trails are planned and approximately 40 miles are completed or in progress.

The community of Butte has utilized CTEP to develop three area trail projects, including the Blacktail Creek Restoration Project, the Continental Drive Trail and the Silver Bow Creek Greenway. Other CTEP projects such as the BA&P Rail Trail are in preliminary planning stages.

The **Blacktail Creek Restoration Project**, completed in 1997, is a 1.5 mile multi-use pedestrian and bicycle corridor that provides a non-motorized east-west access along an improved stream corridor to a trailhead location at Butte's Visitor Information and

Transportation Center. The local government has extended the project with local funds to complete an additional 0.5 mile segment to connect to Butte's popular Father Sheehan Park. CTEP funding for this project amounted to \$958,462.



SIXTY-EIGHT-YEAR-OLD BILL CLARK, left and his 15-year-old grandson, Matt enjoy the Blacktail Creek Trail on inline skates (Summer, 2001). Derek Pruitt/The Montana Standard



THE CONTINENTAL DRIVE PATH, nearing completion, was designed to separate the path user from automobile traffic along a busy section of Continental Drive.

The **Continental Drive Path**, to be completed this summer, extends a popular pedestrian path 1.2 miles on the east side of town running parallel to Continental Drive. CTEP funds totaled \$122,000.

Butte and Anaconda are working together to develop the 26-mile **Silver Bow Creek Greenway Corridor**. This



CTEP FUNDS WILL BUILD BRIDGES to span the newly constructed Silver Bow Creek and pave the Silver Bow Creek Greenway multi-use path for pedestrian and bicycle use along the corridor.

is one of several adaptive reuse projects occurring in the area. A combination of funds, including CTEP funds (approximately \$325,000) will complete the first phase of this 10-15 year project by constructing a 3-mile long, 10 ft-wide, paved multi-use path along Silver Bow Creek.

Trailheads and other amenities will be constructed using funds from the Upper Clark Fork River Restoration Fund.

Another project slated for development with CTEP funds is the conversion of the abandoned historic BA&P line that crisscrosses the Butte Hill to create the **BA&P Rail Trail**.



Coupled with the need to clean up contaminated railbeds, the rail right-of-way will be converted to a pedestrian path with trail amenities and companion interpretive signs to highlight the colorful history of the surrounding neighborhoods. CTEP will fund approximately \$211,000 towards this project. This trail will provide a ribbon of history for pathway users to follow for both residents and visitors.

CONVERTING RAILS TO TRAILS, the historic BA&P railroad right-of-way will be converted to a multi-use path, traversing the Butte Hill.



Gazebo and Sidewalk

Circle

McCone County is finishing up a CTEP project that included installation of underground sprinkler systems, construction of two wheelchair accessible ramps, a sidewalk with a handicapped accessible curb cut, seeding, and planting of numerous trees and shrubs.

The project involved three sites in Circle: the library, the courthouse, and the gazebo.

Special thanks to Commissioner Connie Eissinger for getting this project through. Also, kudos to



Library

Stevenson Design and Magic Construction, both of Miles City, for their efforts. Construction cost was about \$73,000.

Next time you find yourself in Circle, take notice of the landscaping, or maybe have a picnic at the gazebo. All three sites can be found in the central business district. And in case you're wondering, Circle was named after the circle brand of one of Montana's first cattle outfits.



Fishtail

So, you think you don't have enough CTEP funds to do a worthwhile project? Here's one that came in for less than \$5000.

The Fishtail Community Center, a local civic club, wanted to spruce up the Fishtail Community Park. The park is a community meeting place for all to share as well as a place for a rest or a picnic for those passing through. The park is located on Secondary 419 where the road makes a sharp turn into Fishtail.

CTEP funds were used to help purchase an underground sprinkler system, irrigation pump, pump shed, grass seed, flowering plants, a pedestrian bench, and safety fencing. The installation and planting were all completed on a volunteer basis. The archway that you see in the photo (above) was donated by others.

Special thanks to the Fishtail Community Center and to Bo Bowman of Stillwater County for their hard work in making this project happen.

But wait! There's more. A second CTEP project at the same site is about to get underway. This project will include additional underground sprinkler lines, seeding, and safety fencing as well as a sidewalk, bicycle rack, and hard-surfaced handicapped parking space.

And the name "Fishtail"? Legend has it that a local mountain was shaped like a fishtail, hence the name.

Transportation Awareness Program

Did you see us this summer? MDT's Transportation Awareness Program (TAP) was out in full force at county fairs, parades and rodeos across Montana. From Kalispell to Wolf Point, we were there in the 100+ degree heat with smiling faces for our customers.

Fair-goers got an up-close look at one of the biggest, most powerful snowplows in the country at the TAP booth and a chance to kick the tires, blow the horn and sit behind the wheel. We also had our visitors fill out a cus-



tomer questionnaire where if you learn something, you earn something. By spinning the prize wheel they had a chance to win Snow Plow Tattoos, car visors, t-shirts, Frisbees and

the biggest hit of the summer, mister bottles.

The total number of people reached this year was not in as of print time, but last year we talked to over 70,000 people and are well on our way to doing that again this year.

TAP has recently been moved to MDT's Public Affairs Office, under the direction of Lisa Vander Heiden. Mary Ann Toohey and Prudence Hulman are at the helm and ready to serve our customers!



For more information about TAP contact MaryAnnToohey, mttoohey@state.mt.us or Prudence Hulman, phulman@state.mt.us.



All photos from the Billings Fair - taken by Mary Ann Toohey



TRANPLAN 21 UPDATE 2002

Consultant Team Selected

As reported in the last edition of Newsline, MDT is preparing to update TranPlan 21, Montana's statewide multimodal transportation plan. The update will focus on developing transportation policies that support economic development efforts, strengthen ties with MDT's new performance programming process, and address other major issues identified during the public involvement process. Following an extensive selection process, MDT recently contracted with a consultant team with national and Montana experience to lead the update effort. The team includes:

* **Dye Management Group** - Dye was the lead firm in the original TranPlan 21 effort in 1994 and 1995, developed the Federal Highway Administration training course on statewide multimodal planning, and has assisted 5 other western states in statewide transportation planning projects.

* **Cambridge Systematics** - CS assisted MDT in the development of the performance programming process (P³) and has been involved in statewide transportation planning efforts in 11 states.

* **Economic Development Research Group** - EDRG has conducted research on the measurement of economic development impacts of transportation investments for the Transportation Research Board and has evaluated the economic impacts of local and regional highway projects in 6 states.

Watch for more news about the 2002 TranPlan 21 Update in future editions of Newsline and on MDT's website at www.mdt.state.mt.us.

Border Surveys

With three Canadian provinces to the north of Montana, accurate cross-border crossing information is critical to MDT's transportation planning activities. In addition to the traffic count data collected throughout Montana, MDT also works with provincial transportation agencies to conduct cooperative border surveys to collect data about traffic origins and destinations as well as other information for MDT's statewide planning needs.

Project Coordination

Montana's major highways are critical parts of our national transportation system. This is especially true for the nearly 3,900 miles of Montana highways such as US 93, US 2, and US 191 that are on the National Highway System. Because of this, MDT coordinates planning for future improvements to highways near Montana's borders with state transportation officials at both the district and headquarters level. This coordination ensures that these highways provide modern and safe routes for interstate traffic.

Trade Corridor Initiatives

Since 1991, Montana has participated in several multi-state efforts focused on trade corridors. These efforts have included the Camino Real Corridor Coalition, the Western Transportation & Trade Network and the CANAMEX Corridor Coalition. MDT's goal in these multi-state initiatives is to obtain useful information for MDT's statewide planning process and explore opportunities to work with other states on projects that are mutually beneficial.

WASHTO & AASHTO

In addition to the regional efforts described above, MDT also participates in organizations such as the Western Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials and the American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials. By participating in these organizations, MDT can learn about issues and initiatives that might affect Montana's transportation system and work with other association members on issues and projects of common interest.

Multi-State Highway Transportation Agreement (MHTA)

MHTA is a unique organization of state legislators and appointed officials that works on issues related to commercial vehicle operations. The group focuses on the institutional and regulatory barriers that are often more restrictive to interstate transportation than infrastructure constraints.

For more information contact Dick Turner at (406) 444-7289 or dturner@state.mt.us.



*The new Lost Trail Pass Rest Area
and an example of Multi-state efforts*

Funding for Urban Highway Pavement Preservation

A new highway project funding opportunity is in the works for Montana's 15 urban areas. The Urban Highway Pavement Preservation Program is being developed through a coordinated effort involving MDT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) at MSU-Bozeman. This program will strive to implement cost-effective treatments to the existing urban routes that will preserve the system, delay future deterioration and improve condition without increasing capacity.

Total funding for this program is approximately \$4.5 million. Projects will be selected among the eligible areas on a needs basis. Eligible areas include those communities with a minimum population of 5,000 based on 2000 Census data. Recommended improvements will be proposed through the local agencies and MDT Districts based on a pavement management system (PvMS). Specific treatments may include crack seals, thin lift overlays, seal and covers and fog seals. Project development and construction will be managed by MDT.

Because FHWA requires that these sorts of treatments be selected through a pavement management system, eligible communities are responsible for implementing and maintaining a valid PvMS in their urban area in order to participate in this program. Recognizing that many areas may not have a PvMS, MDT and LTAP are sponsoring a training course on pavement management Sept 11-13 at the Wingate Inn in Helena. Registration information can be obtained through the LTAP Conference Coordinator, Donnetta Bohrman at (800) 541-6671. Information regarding the funding program can be obtained from Lynn Zanto at (406) 444-3445 or lzanto@state.mt.us.

Rest Area Progress Update

MDT continues to make progress in upgrading and better maintaining its rest areas in response to suggestions and issues identified through a survey of rest area users and analysis conducted as part of MDT's 1999 Rest Area Plan update. MDT recognizes that rest areas are an integral component of Montana's highway system and are gaining popularity with the traveling public. Today's travelers expect more than just a place to rest – they want a safe, well-maintained rest area to use the restrooms, picnic area, telephone and get traveler information - and MDT is listening.

Montana's newest rest area in Bozeman is an example of one of the new rest area designs MDT has developed in response to suggestions from the public. The state-of-the-art facility has been very popular with both in-state and out-of-state visitors. As MDT gradually incorporates these designs into its rest area construction and reconstruction projects over the next few years, Montana residents and out-of-state visitors should see significant improvements in rest areas across the state.

Construction is also nearing completion at the Lost Trail Pass rest area at the junction of US 93 and MT 43 in partnership with MDT, Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) and the US Forest Service (USFS). Contracts have been awarded for reconstructing the Sweet Grass rest area on Interstate 15 at the Canadian border, and a visitor center/rest area at Lolo Pass on US 12 at the Idaho-Montana border, another joint effort with MDT, ITD and the USFS. Planning is also underway for several more rest area projects throughout Montana.

In addition to the new rest areas under construction or in the works, MDT has also improved the maintenance of existing rest areas by strengthening its maintenance contracts and improving cleaning practices.

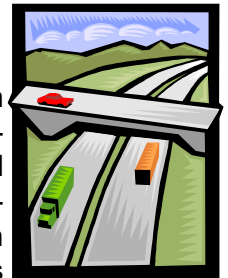
For more information on rest area projects in your area, contact Jan Vogel at (406) 444-4262 or jvogel@state.mt.us.



Sweet Grass Rest Area

TSEP Planning Grants Still Available

As of August 14th, five counties (Blaine, Hill, Madison, Ravalli and Stillwater) have each been awarded \$15,000 planning grants to evaluate their county's bridges and prepare preliminary engineering reports (PER). Two other counties (Yellowstone and Lewis & Clark) have applied for and are also expected to be awarded \$15,000 planning grants. The Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC) Treasure State Endowment Program (TSEP) is providing these grants in an effort to help counties with the up-front costs of accomplishing the preliminary engineering that is required in order to apply for a TSEP construction grant.



The planning grants can only be used to fund work related to preliminary engineering. The grant can be used to assess the condition of any of the bridges within the applicant's jurisdiction. These funds are especially important for helping counties assess bridges that are the responsibility of the county and that MDT does not inspect.

TSEP will provide up to \$15,000, with a dollar for dollar local match, for the preparation of plans, studies, analyses, or research in the preparation of a PER. This is not a competitive process. These grants are on a first-come first-served basis and eligible applicants can apply at any time. However, as of August 14th, MDOC has awarded \$194,404 to 16 local governments and has 5 additional applications pending amounting to \$66,250. **As a result, approximately \$164,400 of the \$425,000 available through June 30, 2003 for TSEP planning grants is still available to award to additional local governments.**

With an estimated \$16 million in grant funds to be available to fund construction projects in the next funding cycle (2003 Legislature), local officials should consider whether TSEP funds could help finance one or more of their bridge projects. Now is the time to get the preliminary engineering started if you intend to apply for a construction grant next spring. Based on previous funding competitions, MDOC should be able to fund over 30 projects. **The next application deadline for TSEP construction grants is May 3, 2002.**

For more information about the Treasure State Endowment Program and these preliminary engineering grants, or the various workshops offered each spring and fall, call the TSEP staff at (406) 444-2400. Or you can check out the internet site at <http://commerce.state.mt.us/LocGov/Com/tsep/index.html>. Draft application guidelines for TSEP's next funding cycle (2003 Legislature) will tentatively be available October 2001.



Back-to-School Safety Tips

- When backing out of a driveway or leaving a garage, watch out for children walking or bicycling to school.
- When driving in neighborhoods with school zones, watch out for young people who may be thinking about getting to school, but may not be thinking about getting there safely.
- Slow down. Watch for children walking in the street, especially if there are no side-walks in the neighborhood.
- Slow down. Watch for children playing and congregating near bus stops.
- Be alert. Children arriving late for the bus may dart into the street without looking for traffic.



Remember.....



- Children believe that all grownups will look out for them. They think that if they can see an adult driving a car towards them, the driver must be able to see them.
- Children have difficulty judging the speed and distance of oncoming vehicles.
- Children are easily distracted and tend to focus on the things that interest them at the moment.
- Young children have a physical disadvantage in traffic: their peripheral vision is two-thirds that of an adult.
- Children have difficulty determining where a sound is coming from. Traffic noises and sirens may confuse them.
- Most children lack a sense of danger. They do not understand that an automobile may seriously hurt or kill them if they collide.
- Children are often restless and impatient. They have trouble waiting for things like traffic lights or cars heading in their direction.
- Most children are unable to understand a complex chain of events.

(Brought to you by Ride Safe Inc.)

*If you have an article or information you would like
published in the December issue the
deadline is November 16.*

*Please e-mail to jscott@state.mt.us. or send to Joan Scott,
Montana Department of Transportation, Planning Division,
PO Box 201001, Helena MT 59620-1001.*

*Don't forget you can see this publication on the web at
<http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/planning/newsline.html>
The photos are in color and the MDT website is
full of valuable information!*

Coming Events.....

The Third Annual Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Conference

October 11-12

***Billings Hotel & Convention Center,
1223 Mullaney Lane
Billings.***

The next Transportation Commission Meeting

October 12

***Outlaw Inn
Kalispell.***

Transportation Planning Division Telephone Numbers

Only the most frequently requested numbers are listed here. For an area or person not listed, call **1-800-714-7296** (in Montana only), or **(406) 444-3423**. TTY (406) 444-7696 or 1-800-335-7592.

Administrator (Patricia Saindon)	444-3143
Bike/Pedestrian (Carol Strizich)	444-9273
CTEP (Mike Davis)	444-4383
Mapping	444-6119
Multimodal Planning (Dick Turner) ..	444-7289
Projects (Jeff Ebert)	444-7639
Public Involvement (Dave Dreher) ..	444-6245
Secondary Roads (Gary Larson)	444-6110
Road Inventory (Zia Kazimi).....	444-6111
Traffic Data (Dan Bisom)	444-6122
Transit (Janis Winston)	444-4210
Urban Planning (Lynn Zanto)	444-3445
ITS Planning (Ross Tervo)	444-9248
Newsline Editor (Joan Scott)	444-7307

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MDT's Mission

*To serve the public by providing a transportation system
and services that emphasize quality, safety, cost effectiveness,
economic vitality and sensitivity to the environment.*

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